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*La Plus Ancienne Décretale.* Thèse présentée à la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Paris. Par E. CH. BABUT. (Paris : Société Nouvelle de Librairie et d'Édition. 1904. Pp. 87.)

*Le Concile de Turin.* Essai sur l'Histoire des Églises provençales au V<sup>e</sup> Siècle et sur les Origines de la Monarchie romaine. Par E. CH. BABUT. [Bibliothèque de la Fondation Thiers, Fascicule VI.] (Paris : Alphonse Picard et Fils. 1904. Pp. xi, 313.)

THESE two theses presented to the University of Paris invest the study of the chronological problems of obscure documents with charm of style and a wealth of scholarship. With the ease of full knowledge and accurate penetration, M. Babut interprets these minor data in the framework of an interesting historic process. In the first thesis he persuasively argues his discovery of the earliest extant decretal from a Roman bishop. Among the canons of councils in the manuscript of Angoulême (sixth century) is a document entitled *Canones Romanorum*, which editors have assumed to be the canons of a Roman synod under Siricius (384-399) or Innocent I (401-417). M. Babut argues that we have not a synodal epistle but a decretal from Damasus the predecessor of Siricius. It is shown conclusively that Siricius mentions the document in a letter and that Siricius and Innocent gave more rigorous rules for the cases with which the document deals. The most important case is the question of admitting to the clergy men who had been married after baptism for the second time. The milder position taken by the document is in harmony with Jerome (Ep. LXIX) and is to be assigned to Jerome's protector Damasus rather than to the more rigorous successors. We find, moreover, a less advanced stage of decretal authority. The document argues, while Siricius is known to have commanded the provincial churches. The fact that the author of the canons does not impose law but instructs as to Roman usage is used by M. Babut to explain the later erroneous entry of the document among the acts of councils. The bishops of Gaul who received the instruction did not regard the Roman bishop as their canonical ruler. The pope's name did not matter and was not transcribed in the early copies.

The second thesis illustrates more amply the relation of Gallic churches to the Roman see. Leo I, finding the Gallic bishops indisposed to yield to his decisions, obtained from Valentinian III the famous decree which made the papal commands obligatory as law for the bishops of Gaul. This measure was necessitated by an earlier crisis. M. Babut aims to fix the date and meaning of the synodal letter of Turin in connection with this earlier effort to extend the ecclesiastical monarchy of Rome over the Provençal bishops. Most authors have conjectured for the lost date of the synodal letter the year 401. Babut holds that the synod's action was intended to invalidate the decretal of Zosimus in March, 417, which ordered Patroclus, bishop of Arles, to assume metropolitan rights in the three provinces of Vienne and Narbonne I and II. The argument turns upon the effort to provide a setting for the acts

of the synod between two letters of Zosimus dated September 22 and September 29. The second of these letters must be provoked by the mere tidings that the synod has opened discussion of the decretal of March. To escape a difficulty it has to be conjectured that another papal letter (*Quod de Proculi*, September 26) has erroneously received the date of the document enrolled just before it in the records of Arles.

To substantiate this construction, which seems to merit assent, Babut gives a very interesting and detailed account of the ecclesiastical conditions of Gaul in the fifth century, and promises a further work on Saint Martin of Tours. He will show that Martin narrowly escaped condemnation for Priscillian views and that Priscillian was only an ascetic pietist, the dogmatic heresies charged upon him being a false misrepresentation.

FRANCIS A. CHRISTIE.

*The Dark Ages.* By W. P. KER. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1904. Pp. x, 361.)

PROFESSOR KER, of University College, London, presents, under the special title of *The Dark Ages*, the first volume of a series of Periods of European Literature to be edited by Professor Saintsbury. As in duty bound, he begins with an attempt to define this much-abused term. He devotes to this his first two chapters, nearly a quarter of the whole little volume. Chronologically he limits his period by the decline of Roman culture on the one hand and the year 1100 on the other. These limits include, so we are told, the migration of the Teutonic peoples, of which Mr. Ker regards the Norman conquest of England as the last wave. He does not mention the Norman occupation of southern Italy, and why the Norman conquest of England is any more a piece of the Teutonic migration than the later and vaster expansion of Teutonic life in the lands eastward from the Elbe is not clear. However, periods must end somewhere, if only for the convenience of the literary historian, and if we must have a "dark" time, we are not disposed to quarrel with Mr. Ker's thesis that with the beginning of the twelfth century a new light is visible both in the subjects and the methods of literary treatment. In the second chapter, "The Elements", we are given a general survey of the whole period with reference specially to the material utilized in literature. The main body of the volume is then divided into two parts, treating respectively the "Latin Authors" and "The Teutonic Languages"; and a short final chapter on the literature of Ireland and Wales completes what is at best but a hasty survey of a vast field.

Of Mr. Ker's scholarly equipment for his task there can be no doubt. The whole volume bristles with "reading". There are enough learned references here to challenge the literary expert at every turn. Indeed, we can hardly see how any one can understand this book to whom the things it deals with are not already perfectly familiar. To such a one it offers a somewhat confused résumé of matters he should know